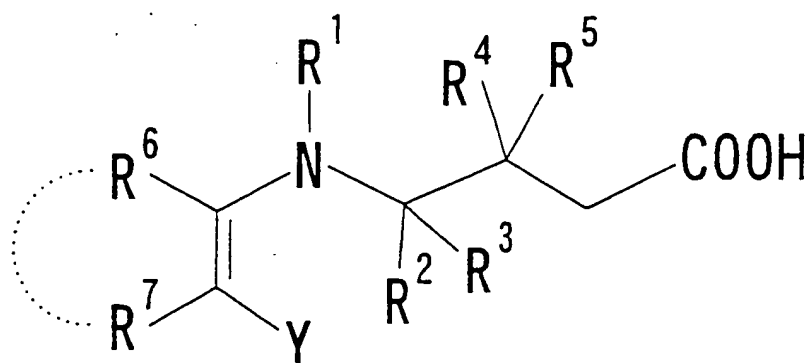


**In the Claims**

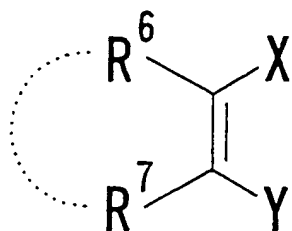
**Please substitute the following claims 8 and 12 for the claims 8 and 12 now pending in the above-identified application.**

**Please cancel claims 9 and 13.**

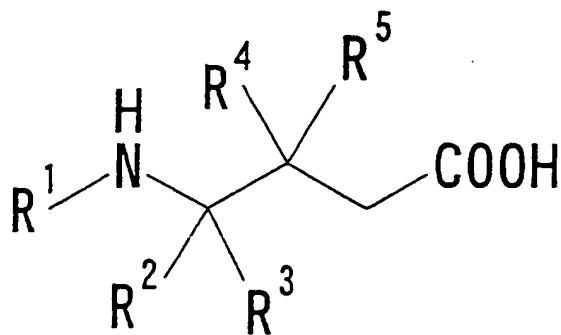
1. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

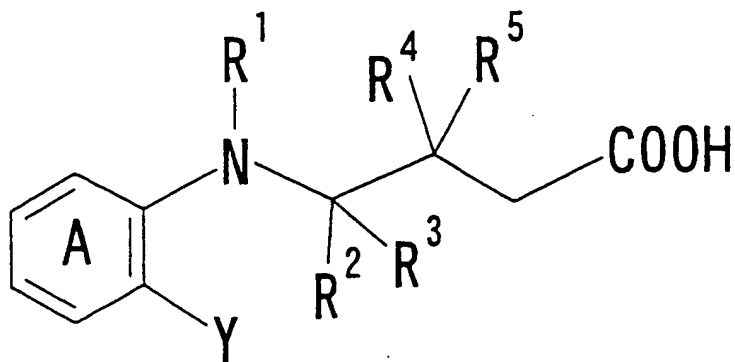


wherein X is a halogen atom; Y is an electron-withdrawing group;  $R^6$  and  $R^7$  are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or  $R^6$  and  $R^7$  may form a ring, or a salt thereof, is allowed to react with a compound of the formula:

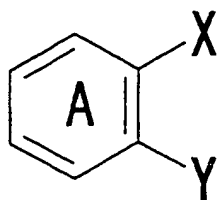


wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group;  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ , and  $R^5$  are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$ ,  $R^1$  and  $R^4$ ,  $R^2$  and  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ , or  $R^2$  and  $R^4$  may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

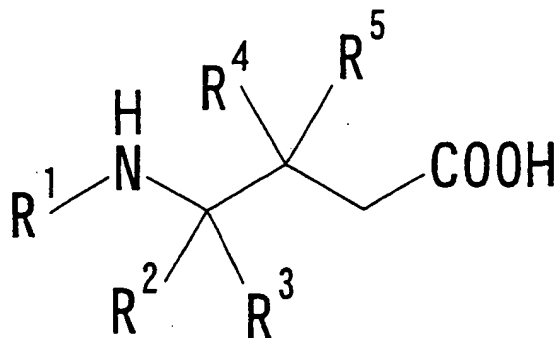
2. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group.
3. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ , and  $R^5$  are hydrogen atoms.
4. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.
5. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

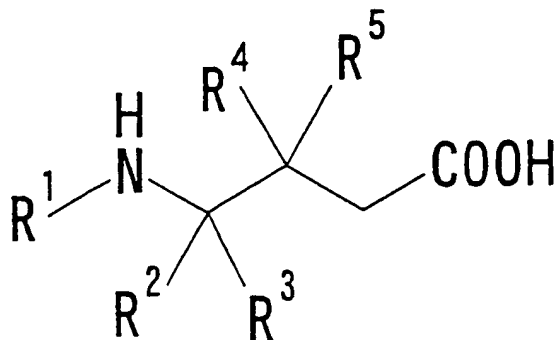


wherein X is a halogen atom; Y is an electron-withdrawing group; and ring A is an optionally substituted benzene ring, or a salt thereof, is allowed to react with a compound of the formula:

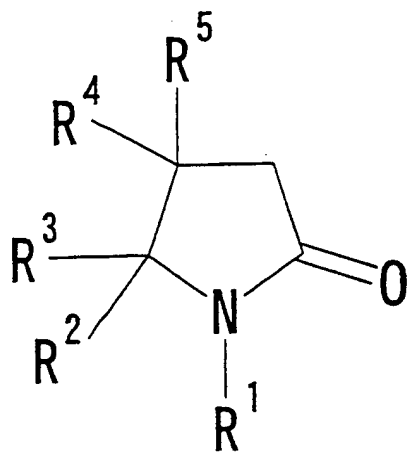


wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group;  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ , and  $R^5$  are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$ ,  $R^1$  and  $R^4$ ,  $R^2$  and  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ , or  $R^2$  and  $R^4$  may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

6. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

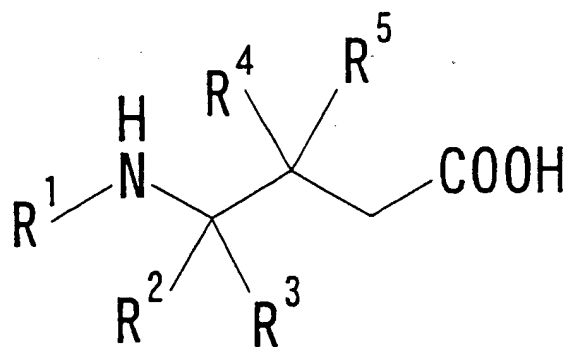


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, is used, which is obtained by hydrolyzing a compound of the formula:

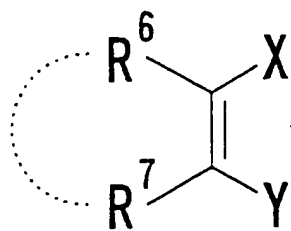


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof.

7. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 6, characterized in that the compound of the formula:

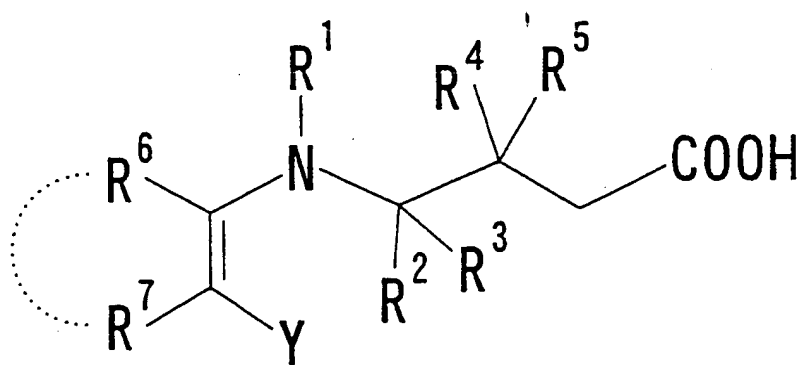


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, is subjected, without being isolated, to the reaction with the compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof.

8. (Currently Amended) A compound of the formula:



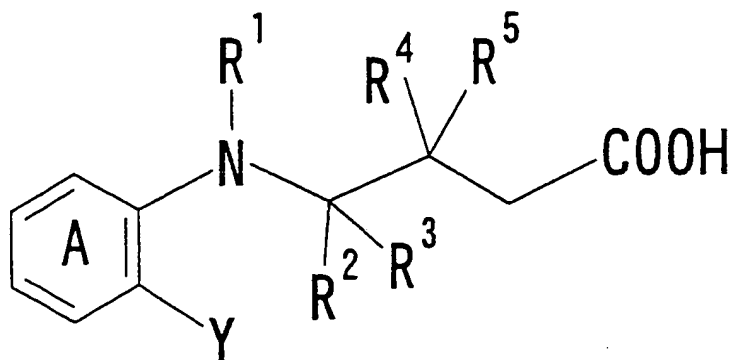
wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group ~~electron-withdrawing group~~; R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group; R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>6</sup>, and R<sup>7</sup> are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, or R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The compound according to claim 8, wherein R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, and R<sup>5</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

11. (Original) The compound according to claim 8, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

12. (Currently Amended) A compound of the formula:



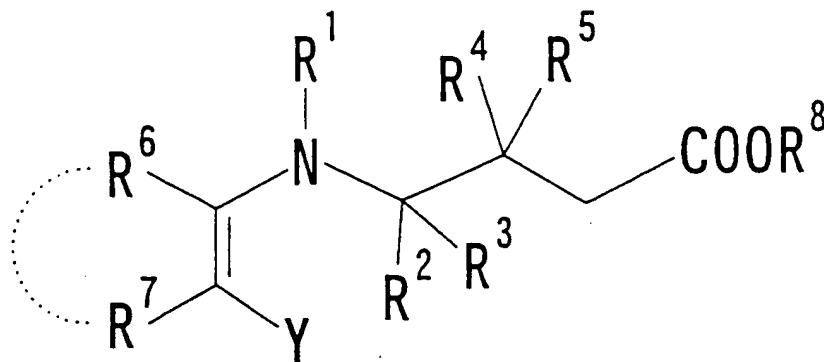
wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group ~~electron-withdrawing group~~; ring A is an optionally substituted benzene ring; R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group; R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, and R<sup>5</sup> are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup>, or R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

13. (Cancelled)

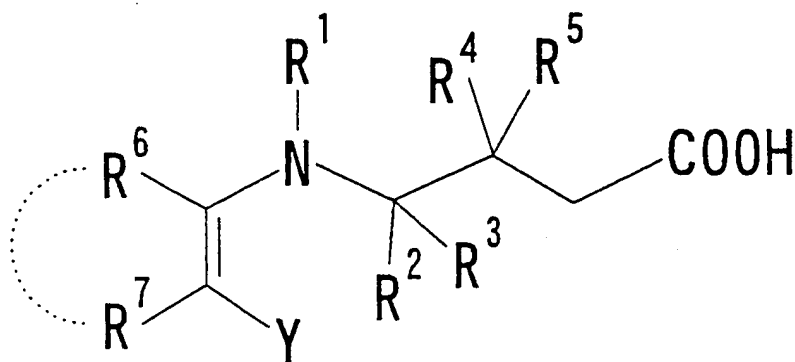
14. (Original) The compound according to claim 12, wherein R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, and R<sup>5</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

15. (Original) The compound according to claim 12, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

16. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein R<sup>8</sup> is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 1, is subjected to esterification.

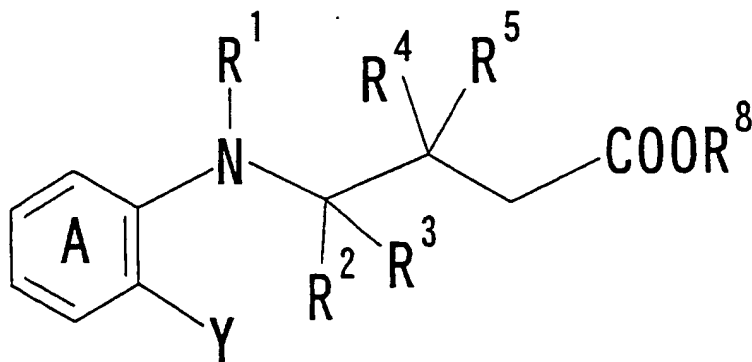
17. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group.

18. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, and R<sup>5</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

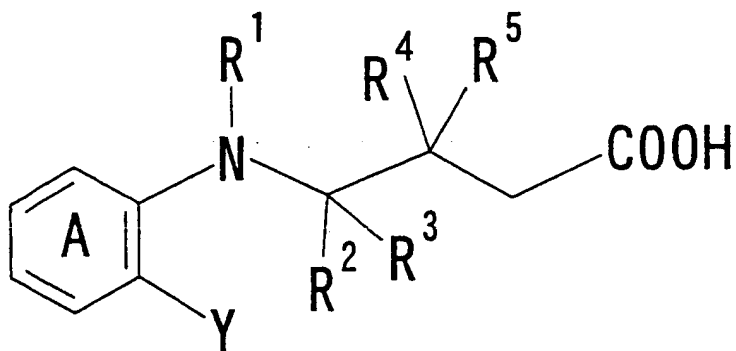


19. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

20. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:

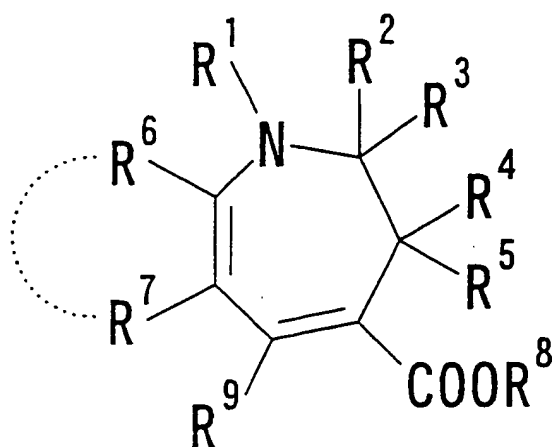


wherein  $R^8$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

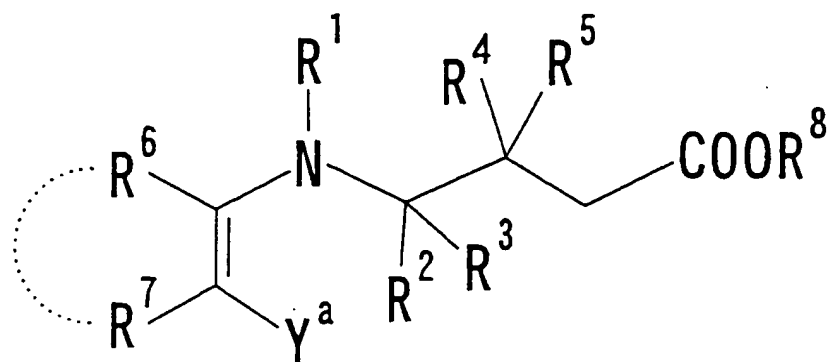


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 5, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 5, is subjected to esterification.

21. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein R<sup>9</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



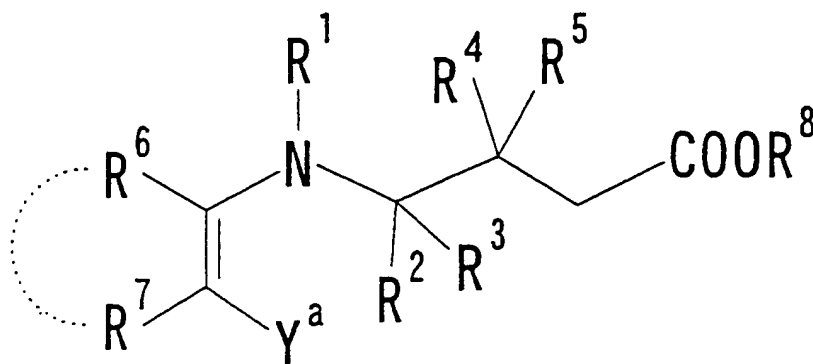
wherein Y<sup>a</sup> is a group of formula -COR<sup>9</sup> wherein R<sup>9</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 16, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 16, is subjected to ring-closing reaction.

22. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, wherein R<sup>9</sup> is a hydrogen atom.

23. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, wherein R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, and R<sup>5</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

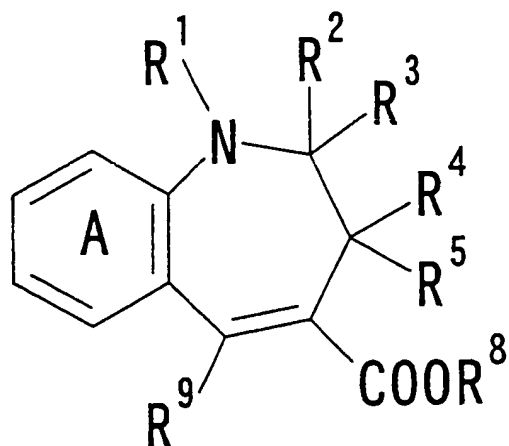
24. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

25. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

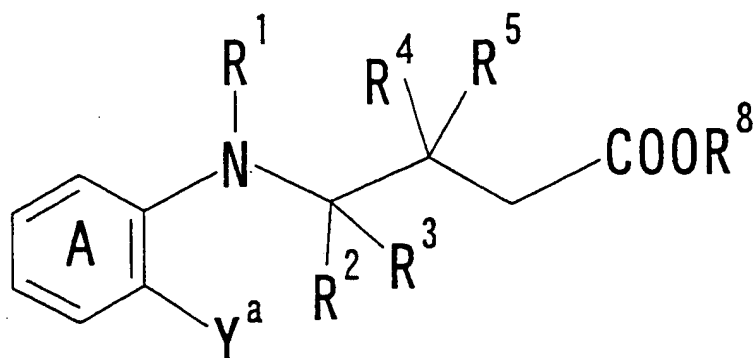


wherein  $Y^a$  is a group of formula  $-COR^9$  wherein  $R^9$  is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 16, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 16, is subjected, without being isolated, to ring-closing reaction.

26. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein  $R^9$  is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



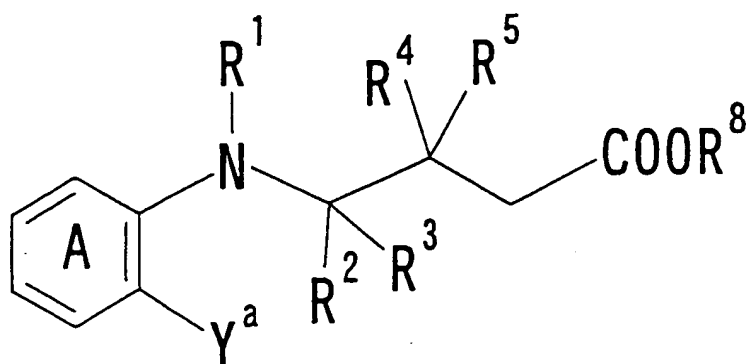
wherein  $Y^a$  is a group of formula  $-COR^9$  wherein  $R^9$  is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 20, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 20, is subjected to ring-closing reaction.

27. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein  $R^9$  is a hydrogen atom.

28. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ , and  $R^5$  are hydrogen atoms.

29. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein  $R^1$  is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

30. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



wherein Y<sup>a</sup> is a group of formula -COR<sup>9</sup> wherein R<sup>9</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 20, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 20, is subjected, without being isolated, to ring-closing reaction.